AN
ESSAY
ON THE
Conflagration
In blank Verse.

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Communis Mundo ſupereſt Rogus. Luc.

M. dez sculp.

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The PREFACE.

AS *the Subject of the following Eſſay deſerves the moſt ſtrict and ſolemn Meditation, ſo it requires the moſt* Able Genius *to manage it with Succeſs.* Milton *was only equal to the Task, or perhaps the Ingenious Mr.* Philips, *who had deſign'd a Poetical Deſcription of the* Future Judgment, *as Mr.* Smith *hints in his moving Elegy upon that Author.*

How difficult muſt it needs be to deſcribe in all the Pomp of Numbers, and Dignity of Thought, a World periſhing in Flames, Rocks melting, The Earth trembling, Meſſiah *with an Hoſt of Angels in the Clouds: and (in order to fill the Story with a ſufficient Variety of Circumſtances) to aſcribe to thoſe* Miniſtring Spirits *their ſeveral diſtinct Poſts, Characters, and Offices in bringing about the Grand Period of Nature!*

But how yet more difficult must it be, when Things Future *are to be repre-ſented, to uſe Colours ſtrong enough to give them* Real Life, *and make them appear preſent to the Mind!*

I wiſh ſome Great Pen *would under-take ſo vaſt a Work, and by his lofty, and lively Deſcriptions make us, as it were, Anticipate* that Day, wherein the Heav'ns being on Fire ſhall be diſ-ſolv'd, and the Elements ſhall melt with fervent Heat. *A finiſh'd Piece of this Kind would be admir'd, as a Prodigy, and never be in Danger of Periſhing, but in* the General Blaze: *when (as Mr.* Cowley *finely expreſſes it)*

— The wide extended Skie,
And all th' Harmonious Worlds on high,
And Virgil's Sacred Work ſhall die.

For my own Part, I never pretended to ſet forth an exact, and regular Poem upon a Subject ſo Copious, and truly Sublime.

The PREFACE.

A Modest Essay *was the utmost of my Ambition.*

The Dialogue in the First Book may, perhaps, be thought too long, and tedious, too much disproportion'd to the Bulk of the whole Composition. But granting this is true, I have some Pretence to hope for the Critick's *Pardon.*

The Renown'd Dr. Burnet *having shewn such a masterly Genius in his Account of* the Conflagration, *I was tempted to extract many of his Notions, and therefore was oblig'd to make Use of some Kind of* Machinery. *The Angel was not brought down without urgent Occasion; nor could He have been dismiss'd sooner without making the Dialogue imperfect, and breaking the Thread of that admirable Writer's Argument: of whom it may be truly said, that so deep are his Meditations, so Philosophical his Conjectures, so bright his Thoughts, and so warm his Expressions;*

that

that who-ever has once got a true Taſte of that Author, cannot find in his Heart to leave Him.

But, how faulty ſoever I may appear in the Conduct of this Work; I took care to intermix Nothing, but what bears a cloſe Analogy with what is deliver'd in Holy Writ, *ſo that, if I am not capable of pleaſing the more* delicate *Reader, however I ſhall give no Offence to the* Scrupulous.

The Inſpir'd Books *are full of the nobleſt Materials for* Divine Poetry, *and 'tis impoſſible not to take Fire at every Hint, we fetch from thoſe Sacred Treaſures.*

No one therefore will blame me for endeavouring to ſupport the Weakneſs of my own Sentiment, and Style by the Strength, and Sublimity of Scripture Phraſe.

Who-ever conſults thoſe lofty Paſſages in Job, the Pſalms, and the Prophets, *will find inexpreſſible Majeſty*

jeſty in every Thought, and inimitable Thunder in every Word.

In the Second Book, I choſe to follow ſome Uſeful Conjectures of the Pious, and Learned Dr. Sherlock; *who ſuppoſes, that when* the Meſſiah *comes down from Heaven to judge the World, His Throne will be a bright, reſplendent Cloud in the Form of a Magnificent Throne, plac'd in the Air at ſome Diſtance from the Earth. And with Reſpect* to the Conflagration, *He believes, it will be an Act of Judgment, and Vengeance: as St.* Paul *tells us*; He ſhall deſcend from Heaven in flaming Fire, taking Vengeance on Them, that know not God. *So that, after the Saints are receiv'd into Bliſs, and the Sentence is paſs'd upon Wicked Men, the World ſhall kindle into Flames, and make a* Hell *for them.*

Dreadfull Time to conſider of! and indeed, if what the Scripture *mentions,*

as

as the Fore-runners, and Reasons of our Lord's *coming to Judgment, be true; viz.* Infidelity, Heresie, and Profane Scoffing at Religion: *I wish, that we in this Age have not too much Cause to apprehend* the Judge to be at the Door, and the End of All Things to be at Hand.

I cannot better conclude this Preface, *than with the Words of that excellent Author afore-mention'd, tho' with some Alteration.*

"*Thus I have humbly attempted to*
"*give the Reader a brief, but imperfect,*
"*View of the Circumstances, and Man-*
"*ner of Christ's Appearance, and the*
"*awfull Solemnities of Judgment; every*
"*Part of which is for the Glory of our*
"*Lord, for the Comfort of Good Men, and*
"*a Terrour to the Wicked. God grant, we*
"*may so think of this Day before-hand,*
"*that we may not feel the Terrour, and*
"*Astonishment of it, when it comes!*

AN

AN ESSAY ON THE *Conflagration*

In blank Verſe.

BOOK I.

A Godlike Man encount'ring Helliſh Foes,
And dying for th' important Cauſe of Truth,
In artleſs Verſe I ſung. A bold Attempt
For any Vulgar Muſe! But now inſpir'd
With deep, and ſolemn Thought of Nature's Doom,
I ſing a loftier Theme; the World on Fire!

O thou Eternal Spirit, who firſt didſt move
Upon the vaſt Abyſs with Wings out-ſpread,
Creating Light from Darkneſs, and this Earth
From a rude Chaos; aid my aſpiring Song.

Thou, when all Fleſh was grown corrupt, the World
With Violence fill'd, didſt from thy Throne look down
Reſolv'd on Vengeance, tir'd with ſinfull Man.
When ſuddenly Heav'n's Windows open'd wide,
Pouring down Cataracts: then were broke up
The Fountains of the Deep, and the old World,
Saving what rode ſecure in Noah's Ark,
Devoted to an univerſal Wreck.

Thou too All gracious! when the Earth appear'd
And Deluge ſtole with ſoft Foot tow'rds the Deep,
Didſt enter into Covenant with man,
Never to blot out Human Race again
By merc'leſs Flood: and for a laſting Sign
Hung'ſt out thy triple colour'd Bow. Thenceforth

The Seaſons all ſhall in due Order paſs,
And ſo return; *till Fire purge all things new,*
Both Heav'n, and Earth, wherein the Juſt ſhall dwell.

Thou then Omniſcient Spirit, Eternal God!
(Scarce can I utter thy tremendous Name)
With Heav'nly Rays illumine all my Soul,
And raiſe my Thoughts to an exalted Strain,
Equal to my important Theme. Thou know'ſt,
O Lord of Hoſts! the Impotence of Man:
Unclean his Lips! A Pilgrim in a World
Of Woe, and Sin! Send a bright Seraph down,
And from thy burning Altar let him take
A Living Coal, and lay the ſacred Fire
On my unhallow'd Mouth. Then purg'd from Sin
I'll ſoar the Height of this great Argument,
Deſcribe the flaming Globe, and like a Trump,
My Verſe ſhall ſound, ſhall make the Atheiſt ſhrink,
And Deiſt tremble. Sinners ſhall awake
Out of their Lethargy, and look a-ghaſt

Involv'd in Fire, and Smoak. Thus Poetry
Shall profit, and ſhall rouze a ſluggiſh World.

My Pray'r aſcends the Clouds: and in a Trance,
Methought, I ſaw the great Meſſiah Nod,
And all the Empyrean ſhake around,
Except the Throne of God, that ſtood unmov'd.
Forth from the Quire of Heav'n a Seraph flew,
One of the ſpeedieſt wing, and cry'd aloud,
Strike, Son of Man, thy Lyre! undaunted ſing
A ruin'd World. Begin, for Heav'n well pleas'd
Shall lend an Ear, attentive to the Sound.
Aſtoniſh'd I, with humble Voice reply'd.
Hard is the Task, as yet but faintly ſung
The Theme by Ancient Bard, or Modern, how
An aged World ſhall be a Funeral Pile,
And ſink in Flames: how the Diſſolving Earth
Shall groan, and on her trembling Baſis reel.
How her Volcano's wide ſhall ope their Mouths
In Thunder. How the Heav'ns ſhall lie obſcur'd

In Smoak, and Sulphur: Nature in her-ſelf
Againſt her-ſelf conſpiring. Such the Will
Of Nature's Lord, to purge All Things by Fire!

Unable to perſue the vaſt Deſign,
How muſt I ſink, quite overwhelm'd in Thought,
Unleſs, bright Spirit, thou wilt lend me Fire,
And ſuffer nought to damp my intended wing!
To which the Seraph quick as Thought, return'd.
Thy Argument is neither ſtrange, nor new,
For that this Sublunary World ſhall burn,
And ſmoak in Aſhes, Heathen Bards have ſung;
Philoſophers of old, if not from glimpſe
Of Reaſon, yet from borrow'd Light, perhaps
With care tranſmitted down from *Noah*'s Days;
Have well conjectur'd. But I blame thee not
For thus expreſſing modeſt Diffidence.
Conceited Men, who ſwell with lofty Thoughts
Of their own Parts, nor human Weakneſs own,
Of God, and Angels are th' eternal Scorn.

Take

Take this Advice, continue as thou art,
Lowly, and wiſe. I'll dictate, Thou ſhalt write.

Thus He began. Miſtake not, Earth-born Son,
That we the bright Inhabitants of Heav'n,
In Knowledge far ſurpaſſing Human-Kind,
Can yet delineate in it's native Colours
The dreadfull Count'nance of a burning World.
That laſt, tremendous Day, when, lo! the Heavn's
Shall paſs away in Thunder, Elements
With fervent Heat diſſolve, no Angel knows,
No, nor the *Son of Man.* To God alone
Omniſcient it is known, or when, or how
He has decree'd to ſet the World on Fire.
But that he will, is fix'd and certain. Truth
Has ſo reveal'd in lofty, dreadfull Style.
"Of old the mighty Architect did lay
"Earth's deep Foundations, and prop'd up the Heav'ns
"But theſe, O Lord, ſhall periſh, Thou remain!
"Theſe like a Garment ſhall wax old in years,

"An

"And undergo a total change. Heav'n's Hoſt
"Shall fail thro' Age, and the blew vaulted Skie
"Be roll'd together as one mighty Scroll,
"At thy Command, O Lord! convolv'd. The Sun
"Darken'd ſhall mourn in Sack-cloth, and the Moon
"Put on a bloody Veil, againſt the Day,
"The ſolemn, awfull Day, when Chriſt returns.
"Then ſhall his Anger kindle raging Fire,
"And his Breath ſtir the Flame. The Fire ſhall burn
"Down to the loweſt Hell: the Earth conſume
"With her Increaſe. The everlaſting Hills
"Uprooted ſhall retire to ſink in Flames.

The Angel paus'd; but I ſtood fix'd to hear,
Charm'd with the Heav'nly Voice; till, as new wak'd,
Full of Submiſſion I reply'd again.

Divine Inſtructor, bright Intelligence,
What Admiration, and what Thanks are due
To ſuch vaſt Condeſcenſion! Wondrous Gueſt!

Na-

Native of Heav'n, who deign'ſt to viſit Man!

No doubt, the Monarch of the World conceals
From all his Creatures ſome Myſterious Laws.
Nor are his Secrets to be ſcann'd by Thoſe,
Who rather ſhould admire. His Will reveal'd
Sufficient is for Man. This nether World
Lies deſtin'd to a General Flame; but how,
Or when, is not diſclos'd to Spirits above,
Much leſs to Mortal Men. Yet ſay, Sublime
Expounder, may not Creatures, if they liſt,
Their beſt Conjectures try? and exerciſe
With Modeſty thoſe Thinking Pow'rs, they have,
In Contemplation of the beauteous Frame
Of Nature? May they not with Care explore
Her wiſe, and ſtanding Laws? perſue the Chain
Of Second Cauſes, till they find the Firſt;
And then attribute Glory to the High
Creatour, for whoſe Pleaſure all Things are,
And were; to whom the Glory all redounds?

Studious to know each Step, and near Approach
Of Nature to her Doom, each Symptom dire
Of Diſſolution; I implore thy Aid,
Bleſs'd Being! for thou canſt conjecture well.
Thy Knowledge far tranſcends all human Thought,
As with a Garment thou art cloath'd with Light,
And art all Eye, all Soul, and pureſt Flame.

To which the Angel anſwer'd heav'nly mild,

Offspring of Man, in Order next to Us,
And next in Underſtanding! Better far
T' abate thy Thirſt of Knowledge too obſcure.
Sufficient 'twere for thee to know thy Duty
To God, and Man: which done, thou needſt not fear
T' encounter Death, or view this World conſum'd.
The Wreck of Elements, and dreadfull Voice
Of Thunder, would not ſhake thy vertuous Soul:
Red Lightning darted from the burning Skie,
Would play, like lambent Fire, around thy Head.

Let Vertue be thy Care! — But now attend.
As far as Angel's Ken will ſerve, or bold
Conjecture, learn from me, how Time ſhall end.

Then wonder not, that this Terreſtrial Globe
Shall be diſſolv'd, and all that is therein.
Material Compoſitions can't endure
Immortal. What was born, muſt ſometime die.
When Heaven's great King upon the *Chaos* ſtood,
And made it pregnant by his Word of Pow'r;
I ſaw th' uncomely Maſs in Labour heave,
And ſtruggle as a Woman in her Pains.
Till by Degrees ſhe roll'd her formleſs Bulk
Into this Shape, an Habitable Earth.
Then ſang the Morning Stars, and I my ſelf
Among the Sons of God was preſent, when
For Joy we ſhouted at the wondrous Birth.

The Heav'nly Orbs (for ſo You Time compute)
Had by their fix'd, unerring Revolution,
Meaſur'd two thouſand Years, when I beheld

This beauteous Work of Nature all defac'd
By univerſal Deluge. *Water* then
Got th' Aſcendant; laſt of all will *Fire.*

And ſhall I pity now, or rather laugh
At the Opinions quaint and wide of ſome,
Who fondly try to fathom Nature's Depths,
And calculate her Doom, aſpire to know
Each ſingle Particle minute, from whence
The Flame ſhall kindle, and the World expire?

A Sect of Men call'd *Stoicks*, grave, and wiſe
In their own Judgment, long a-go have deem'd,
That when the Sun, and Moon drink up the Sea,
The Earth ſhall burſt with Smoak, and bick'ring Flames.
But when the Ocean's Store ſhall be abſorb'd,
Could not determine; and were therefore loſt
In fruitleſs Searches, and Conjectures vain.

Aſtronomers, who ſtrive to model Heav'n,
And weild the mighty Frame, conſult the Orbs

Wandring, and fix'd: with reſtleſs Pains explore
Their diff'rent Aſpects, and compute their Motion
By tedious Calculation, lab'ring hard
To be miſtaken, and lament their Skill
Defeated. *Plato*'s Year (a fond Conceit!)
For a long Time confounded half the World.

Sybilline Oracles, and *Jewiſh Tales*
Diſcover nought, but Falſehood. *He*, who wrote
Th' Apocalypſe, wrapp'd up Myſterious Truths
In dark, and hidden Phraſe. Nor canſt thou learn
From Writings, tho' inſpir'd, the horrid Juncture,
When Earth ſhall tremble, and her Pillars ſhake,
When *Sinai* ſhall be quite remov'd; when Hills
Soften'd *ſhall melt like Wax*, and yielding Rocks
Turn'd liquid, roll along in Waves of Fire.

With lowly Voice I interrupted thus,
Celeſtial Guide, Interpreter divine!
Thy Words are full of Grace, and Truth. The Time

And Seaſons all are in the Father's Pow'r.
Much leſs can any Son of Man, A Worm!
Arrive at Knowledge, which tranſcends the Sphere
Of wiſeſt Beings; deep ſuppreſs'd in Night.
For ſuch is Nature's Final Doom, remov'd
As wide as Heav'n, and Earth from Human Thought.
But oh! vouchſafe, bright Being, to recount,
What ſpecial Cauſes ſhall at laſt combine
To make ſuch Havock in the Elements,
Earth, Sea, and Air, and make them yield to Fire.
This can't be *only Natural*, but the Work
Of God Omnipotent, who governs all.
Whoſe Voice th' outragious Fire, and bluſt'ring Hail,
Snow, and thick Vapour dank, and dry, obey.
At whoſe Command Obſequious Lightnings burſt
The pregnant Clouds, and from their hidden Stores
Reply in mutt'ring Thunder, *Here we are.*
To Pow'r leſs Sovereign how ſhall we aſcribe
So wondrous an Event? that Earth's wide Globe
Environ'd with a counter Element

To Fire, and drench'd with Rivers numberleſs,
That flow in ſmooth, or rapid courſe; this Earth
Founded on Seas, and on the Floods prepar'd,
Whoſe inmoſt Bowels are with Springs ſupply'd
For Moiſture, and entrench'd with Channels deep,
Whoſe ſubterraneous Waters penſive glide
Thro' all her Pores, and fatal Drought prevent;
Should e'er lie parch'd with Heat, involv'd in Flames.

Nor is th' *opacous Globe* ſecur'd alone
By Water from the Tyranny of Fire.
Behold, what Mountains lift their craggy Heads
Above the Clouds! what Rocks are rang'd along
O'er Iſles, and Continents! enough to ſtay
The Progreſs of the moſt victorious Flame.
Some Parts, I grant, ſuch as where *Ætna* burns,
Whoſe fuel'd Entrails ſudden Fire conceive,
And belch out diſtant Ruin, may incur
Deſtruction. But the Body of Earth entire
What fiery Deluge can ſubdue? Some Climes

Ma

May burn with Heat exceſſive; but the Poles,
Where ever during Snow, and Ice prevail,
Muſt doubtleſs yield a cool, and ſafe Retreat.
Such Thoughts ſometimes occur, and hold my Mind
In deep ſuſpence. But I with Rev'rence due,
Angel Serene, wait from thy Sacred Lips
A full Solution giv'n to all my Doubts.

Benevolent, and facil He reply'd,
Accept of my Endeavors, Son of Man!
Thy fervent Thirſt of Knowledge to allay,
By Diſquiſitions ſubtle, and profound.
As rightly we attribute to a Pow'r
Miraculous, that Univerſal Flood,
Which drown'd Mankind corrupt in *Noah*'s Days:
But yet material Cauſes then concurr'd
To work the dire Effect; Deſcending Rains,
And the Diſruption of the wide Abyſs.
So when the World (and by the World is meant
Only this *Sublunary*) ſhall endure

A ſecond Diſſolution, Nature's Pow'rs
Will all conſpire to uſher in th' Event
Tremendous, guided by an Arm unſeen.

Some deem, thou know'ſt, the Sun's prodigious Sphere
Now moving at a Diſtance infinite
From this ſmall Globe, by gradual Approach
Shall act upon it with tranſcendent Force,
And aided by th' Eruption of a Flame
Central, within Earth's Boſom deep enclos'd,
Create th' amazing Scene, and horrid Blaze,
Embowel all the Regions of the Air
With Smoak and min'ral Fury, turn the Earth
Now ſolid, to a Sea of Molten Fire.

But never dream, the Earth's vaſt Luminary
Will quit his Station. That huge Globe of Fire,
If ſuffer'd to break looſe, would ſoon convert
Ten thouſand Worlds to one conflagrant Maſs;
Such as this Spot of Earth minute. But know,

hat God, and Nature his Vicegerent uſe
o Means ſuperfluous to accompliſh Ends.
would argue Weakneſs in the Sovereign Mind
o diſproportion Cauſes to Effects.
ttribute therefore this Opinion quaint
f the Sun's wheeling his Courſe nearer Earth,
o ſome old Fiction of a Poet's Brain.
ch as of *Phaëton* Men fable. He,
ffspring of *Phœbus* (Heath'niſh Tale!) aſpir'd
o mount his Father's Chariot; which obtain'd
ith raſh, and erring Hand he drove the Steeds
own from th' *Ecliptic* to the verge of Earth.
dden the Blaze bagan, the Mountains ſmoak'd,
nd Nature troubled at the Proſpect near
f Final Ruin, gave a horrid Groan
hro' all her Works. Sure Preſage of her Doom!

Not ſo fictitious that conſpiring Cauſe
he *Central* Fire. What if the Earth contain
flaming Maſs deep in her Center lodg'd?

Such as by Nature chiefly was intended
T' invig'rate all her Parts, give Life, and Birth
To her Productions; till the Lord Supreme
Of Nature, ſummon all theſe latent Seeds
Forth from her pregnant Womb; whoſe ſolemn C
Precipitant each Atom ſhall obey,
And iſſuing thro' Earth's Pores in balefull ſteams,
No longer warm her with a gentle Heat,
But in her Boſom kindle glowing Fires.

Thou may'ſt exclude the *Central* Heat, aſſign
Theſe pow'rfull Cauſes in full ſtrength combin'd,
Volcano's, Earthquakes loud, and Meteors dire.
Haſt thou not ſeen ſome Mountains huge appea
With Smoak, and Flame, and ſulph'rous Vomit blac
Their broad, bare Backs ambitious they up-heave
Into the Clouds, their Summits reach the Skie.
So high as heave their lofty Heads, ſo low
Within, a hollow bottom broad deſcends,
Capacious Bed of ardent Matter: Gurge

ituminous, ſurcharg'd with liquid Fire:
Vhich fann'd by Winds in ſecret Caverns lodg'd,
Mountain on a ſudden ſeiz'd with Pangs,
Gins bellowing, reſtleſs to diſcharge it's Load.
arth ſhakes, and feels Convulſions. Oft the Sun
imſelf amaz'd will hide his Head, appal'd,
onfounded; ſometimes in a dusky Veil,
nd ſometimes all in Blood: as Nature's ſelf
ere ready to expire! Theſe Symptoms ſad
recede. And then (all dreadfull to behold!)
moak iſſues out in Clouds, and curling Flames
ſcend. Soon after this, large Vollies flie,
ragments of burning Rock, Metallic Lumps,
nd Min'rals half diſſolv'd with Coals of Fire.

Such monſtrous Treaſures th' *American* Land,
r new found World may boaſt! and ſuch the Iſles
am'd *Oriental*, fraught with Fiery Stores!
ch moſt in *Europe* rage, and not unknown
o thee. Volcanian Iſlands made renown'd

By Poets; feign'd to be the Forges, where
The ſmoaky Cyclops labour'd Arms for *Jove*:
Strombolo, *Lipara*. But fam'd the moſt
Is *Ætna*'s thund'ring Top, *Sicilian* Mount,
And old *Veſuvius* belching o'er the Plains
Of *Italy* red Flame, and rolling Smoak.

Nor deem thy ſelf ſecure beneath the Poles
Freezing, by Cold extream aſſaulted. There
Ev'n *Iceland* burns. *Volcano's* loud are heard
To thunder thro' the Iſle; where *Hecla*'s Top
Aſcends the Skie, white with eternal Snows.
But (what may ſound perhaps incredible
To thee) there lies a formidable Store
Horded within it's Belly enormous, Mines
Of ever burning Sulphur unconſum'd:
Which oft-times kindl'd into open rage
Spout liquid Flame: Th' Inhabitants abaſh'd
Behold the diſmal Cave on all ſides round,
As one great Furnace flame, and count it Hell.

Tho' but a faint Reſemblance of that Place,
Where Fire, and Horrour ſhot with equal Rage
Still urge, and Pangs and Torture without End.

Here I had interpos'd. But deep engag'd
My Heav'nly Gueſt went on, whilſt raviſh'd I
Attended, eager to catch ev'ry word.
Then He— Know, fond Enquirer, that the Earth
In form is round, and cavernous, replete
With fiery Vapours, which from Drought intenſe
Shall gender more, till with collected Strength,
Impatient of Confinement ſtrict, they heave
The groaning Maſs, and rend the hollow Ground.
Such Thunder Subterraneous ſhall Earth's Womb
Diſplode in dreadfull Tire: A Prelude ſure
To her tremendous Doom! The lofty Hills
Shall be made low: Woods, Cities, ſtrongeſt Forts
Sink, in one mighty Ruin overwhelm'd.

So (to compare great Things with ſmaller) when

The Sons of *Korah* God moſt High provok'd,
Their Cenſers fum'd ungratefull: and the Earth
Reluctant felt their Weight; till a *new Thing*
The Lord created. Sudden Tremblings ſeiz'd
The Ground, whereon they ſtood. At length a Pit
Deep, and extended wide in vengeance clave
Beneath their unbleſs'd Feet. The Earthquake ſhook
On all ſides horrible. But quick the Crew
Rebellious with their Habitations ſunk,
Eternal Monuments of Wrath! mean time
All *Iſrael* ſaw, and ſtruck with Fear retir'd.

Add to Earth's copious Fuel, what the Air
Shall miniſter in large Supplies, to haſte
The Univerſal Fire. Where fertile Clouds
Wont to drop Fatneſs, their freſh Dew diſtill'd,
And Bleſſing on the Earth, there Nought, but Fires
Compact of unctuous Vapours, ſhall be ſeen
To blaze terrific, ev'ry where diffus'd.
Loud Peals of Thunder ſhall be heard to roar,

Wing'd with red Lightning, which in Torrents pour'd
Upon this Globe, ſhall Man, and Beaſt conſume.
The Sun with more than wonted Strength ſhall dart
His Rays direct, and ſcorch Earth's inmoſt Womb.
No gentle Show'rs ſhall fall, but Flames driv'n down
Shall tine the Gummy Bark of Firr, and Pine.
Forreſts ſhall burn, and crackling Harveſts blaze.
Comets now ſeen but rare, wont to import
Dire Revolutions, and with various Fears
Perplexing Nations, with Aſpect malign
Shall ruſh thro' all the Skie, and *from their Hair*
Shake Peſtilence, and War: A Civil War
Of Elements, portending Nature's Doom!
With all this Pomp of Terrour, Earth's fair Frame
Shall be diſſolv'd, and Time ſhall be no more.

At once aſtoniſh'd, and delighted, I
Aſſum'd to ſpeak; Celeſtial Pow'r benign,
I pray thee, be propitious once again
To my Requeſt, and if too bold, forgive.

What

What Stores of Fire ſhall with joint Force contend
To work a Conqueſt o'er the Sea's Abyſs
Succeſsful? what? tho' ev'ry pregnant Sluce
Of the wide Firmament be *ſtay'd*? no Rain,
Nor Dew deſcend, but ev'ry purling Spring,
And Fountain ceaſe to flow: Shall mighty *Nile*
Be e'er exhauſted? *Volga's* ſev'nty Mouths
Be choak'd with Flame? The *Po*, or *Britiſh Thames*
Yield to the longeſt Drought? much leſs the Sea
Unmeaſurably deep?——

The Angel gave Reply with Aſpect ſtern,
Vain Man, conſider, and thy Doubts remove!
Becauſe the Day is almoſt ſpent, and fix'd
Is my Departure hence to Heav'n's great King,
I ſhall not multiply Diſcourſe. What need
Of tedious Diſſertation to explain
By Cauſes *Natural*, how the Sea ſhall fail,
And want a ſingle Drop. How Springs ſhall ceaſe
By Drought extream, and Rivers thence decay?

How

ow much thoſe profluent Arms extended wide
rom the Sea's matchleſs Bulk, when drain'd, ſhall ſtarve
he monſtrous Deep: and all that awkard Sport,
nd Paſtime of the huge Leviathan
hall end? How Fires impriſon'd ſhall with Rage
reak forth, and bellow in the dark Abyſs,
nd ſpout forth Waves of torrent Flame? Confide
ther in Pow'r Omnipotent, to do,
hat elſe ſeems moſt impoſſible. The Lord
th ſpoke, and ſhall it not be done? Of old
All Things form'd, and o'er the empty Place
etch'd out the North, and hung the Earth on Nought
moveable. Then alſo for the Sea
Place decreed was broken up, it's Rage
nſtrain'd with Bars impregnable, the Word
his omnific Pow'r! Ye Waves, he ſaid,
ll hither, and no further! here be ſtay'd,
Billows proud! This ſame Eternal God,
God, and Mine, the High, and Lofty One,
o on his Throne all incorruptible

Sits,

Sits, and directs the wide extended World:
When terribly He comes to judge Mankind,
(The Meaſure of whoſe Guilt ſhall then be full,
Demanding Vengeance) (*He*) ſhall rend the Heav'ns,
And ſhake the Earth. The Mountains all diſſolv'd
Shall flow before him. To the Sea profound,
Be dry, he then ſhall ſay, and yield to Fire!
The Sea ſhall hear his Voice ——

Be well aſſur'd, O Man! (and ask no more)
The Day of Doom muſt come, and 'tis not long,
E'er it will come. Hear, what the *Scriptures* ſay!
"That *Tophet* is ordain'd of old. The Lord
"Hath made it deep, and large; the Pile thereof
"Fuel immenſe, and as a mighty Stream
"Of Brimſtone, ſhall the Wrath of God provok'd,
"Kindle the Flame, and propagate the Blaze.

Arm thou againſt that Hour! Be lowly wiſe.
Controul thy Appetite to underſtand

Things too ſublime, and Truths involv'd in Clouds:
As, how the Ever-Bleſſed Three in One
ubſiſt, diſtinct in Perſon, but the Same
oequal, undivided Eſſence; whom
n Heav'n both Day, and Night we celebrate
ith *Equal* Praiſe, proſtrate before the Throne.

Or, how ev'n God Incarnate dwelt with Men,
aſt Work of Mercy! Angels ſearch in vain
hat Miracle of Love to all the Race
f impious Men: and brighteſt *Seraphim*
flam'd with Love, and ardent Zeal, adore
ontinually, what ſome ungratefull Men
eride, but ſhall one Day with Horrour own.

Thou Son of Man! ariſe with girded Loins,
nd on the Wings of Faith to Heav'n aſpire,
f Faith not wav'ring: Such a *Rock*, whereon
riſt built his Church! nor ſhall Tempeſtuous Storms
ake her Foundation, nor the Gates of Hell,

Much leſs the ſlender Force of Man prevail.
Peace be within her Walls, Proſperity
Within her Palaces! O wiſh long Peace
To thy *Jeruſalem*, as pure on Earth,
As Human Frailties will permit! Her love,
And thou ſhalt proſper. Let her reſtleſs Foes
All periſh! but her Champions deck'd with Light
Rival the Sun, when in full Strength he ſhines,
And glitter like the Stars for evermore.

So ſpake the Angel, *Uriel* was his Name;
He who of old with holy *Eſdras* deign'd
Freely to talk, and num'rous Doubts reſolve.
But now the Time allow'd him to converſe
Was laps'd, when ſtill my eager Thirſt remain'd
Of further Knowledge: and in humble Plight
I had beſought his ſtay. But He appris'd
Of my Intent, ſaid to me, let thus much
Suffice at preſent: more ſhall be explain'd
To thee in *Viſion* — Son of Man farewell!

He ſpoke, and wing'd with Speed his Flight to
My longing Eyes perſu'd him, as he clave [Heav'n.
The yielding Air. So when the *Son of God*
Incarnate, but above th' *Angelic* Hoſt;
Had from his Grave reviv'd, and e'er the Light
Thrice dawn'd, the Stars of Morn had ſeen him riſe
Freſh, as the dawning Light; He ſtay'd ſome time
On Earth, and with his Followers friendly talk'd.
But ſuddenly an ambient Cloud ſerene
Receiv'd him as he bleſs'd the *Twelve*: Aſtoniſh'd
They ſaw their Lord aſcend, and follow'd Him,
As far as Mortal ſight could pierce: then tir'd
With gazing upwards, worſhip'd him unſeen.

The Texts of Scripture alluded to in the First Book.

Gen. 1. v. 2.
Gen. 6. v. 12, 13.
Gen. 7. v. 11.
Is. 6. v. 5, 6, 7.
2 Pet. v. 10.
Mat. 24. v. 36.
Ps. 102. v. 56.
Heb. 1. v. 10, 11.
Is. 34. v. 4.
Ps. 104. v. 2.
Is. 51. v. 6.
Joel 2. v. 31.
Mal. 4. v. 1.
Deut. 32. v. 22.
Amos 9. v. 13.
Rev. 4. v. 11.
Luk. 21. v. 26.
Ps. 68. v. 8.
Job 38. v. 7.
Job 26. v. 11.
Acts 1. v. 7.
Job 25. v. 8.
Job 38. v. 35.
Ps. 24. v. 2.
Is. 40. v. 4.
Num. 16. v. 31, 32, 33, 34.
Ps. 65. v. 11.
Prov. 3. v. 20.
Num. 23. v. 19.
Job. 26. v. 7.
Job 38. v. 10, 11.
Is. 57. v. 15.
Mat. 23. v. 32.
Jud. 5. v. 4, 5.
Is. 30. v. 33.
1 Pet. 1. v. 12.
Mat. 16. v. 18.
Jer. 1. v. 17.
Ps. 122. v. 6, 7.
Judg. 5. v. 31.
Dan. 12. v. 3.
2 Esd. 4.
Luk. 24.

AN

ESSAY

ON THE

Conflagration

In blank Verſe.

BOOK II.

NO more of Talk with Angel as a Friend
Familiar. Bleſſed Interval of Time!
When entertain'd, like *Abraham*, I ſat down
With my indulgent Gueſt, and from his Mouth
Receiv'd Divine Inſtructions, Truths profound!
But now my Earthly Senſes overpow'r'd

In

In Converſation Heav'nly and Sublime,
Sunk down, requiring ſweet Repair of Sleep,
Which fell upon me inſtantly, _ clos'd
My weary Eye-lids. But the Spatious Cell
Of Fancy, *my internal Sight*, remain'd
Still open, where the promis'd *Viſion* ſtrait
Appear'd aſtoniſhing. As when of old
The *Holy Patriarch* from *Beer-ſheba* ſent
To *Padan-aran*, with long journeying tir'd,
Lay down to Reſt under the Cope of Heav'n:
He fell into a ſudden Trance, and ſaw
Abſtract, tho' ſleeping, a delightfull Scene,
Heav'n coming down to Earth! ſo I beheld
Strange Things, as preſent, which are yet to come.

Deſcend, *Urania*, Heav'nly born, deſcend
To patronize me with thy friendly Aid.
That ſo my Style, and Sentiment may riſe
In ſome Proportion to my daring Theme.
Whilom thou didſt in courteous manner deign

Thy nightly Viſitation unimplor'd
To *Milton*'s mighty Genius: and his Verſe
Flow'd unpremeditated; by thy Care
Supported in it's vig'rous Flights. When rapt
Above the Starry Pole, He ſoar'd ſecure,
And ſung with Mortal Voice Immortal Deeds:
Meſſiah Victor from the Rebel Hoſt
Return'd, and all the Terrours of a War
Wag'd by undaunted Spirits: whilſt ev'ry Line
Reſounded deep, with Martial Thunder cloath'd.
Without thy Guidance how ſhall I relate
The coming of *our Lord* to judge the World
In Righteouſneſs? and what the Angel's Voice
Warn'd me, on Earth ſhould come to paſs, deſcribe
In ſolemn Pomp tranſacted, as I ſaw,
Tho' ſleeping? Say, bright Goddeſs, how the Scene
Tremendous open'd, and at length was clos'd.

Behold! the Sun was darken'd, and the Moon
Confounded. Shaken were the Pow'rs of Heav'n.

Earth labour'd under Pangs unfelt before,
And a brown Horrour vail'd the Horizon round.

Now, now all Hands were faint, and ev'ry Heart
Melted, tho' ſtony, and obdurate. Fear,
Anguiſh, and Tribulation ſeiz'd on Men
Expecting Judgment. Ev'n the Godly fear'd!
(For ſcarce the Righteous Man ſhall 'ſcape, much leſs
The Wicked. Where (ah) where ſhall he appear?)

Thus pierc'd with Sorrows, and with Dread perplex'd
Speechleſs, methought, I ſtood with ev'ry Senſe
Aſtounded, and benumm'd: till from high Heav'n,
I heard a Shout, with th' Archangel's Voice,
And Trump of God, which ſhook the Earth, and Sea
And tore Hell's Concave. Such a Peal, as rouz'd
The Dead from their long Sleep, who from the Duſt
(Such as in Chriſt had ſlept, firſt 'woke, and ſang,
Their Dew as freſh as that of ſweeteſt Herbs
Crowning the purple Morn) Their ſcatter'd Atoms
Haſted with glad Precipitance: Such Flight
The Sound of the Celeſtial Tube impreſs'd

On ev'ry Particle, how wide diſpers'd
Soever. Not unlike to Armies call'd
By Martial Drum, or Trumpet ſhrill; they troop
All to their Standard, not one Partie fails.

So ſwift dead Bodies were reſtor'd, and Bones
Lapleſs, and dry receiv'd new Life! I heard
A Noiſe, and then a Shaking, Bone to Bone
United, and (behold!) thereon were laid
Embroider'd Sinews, Fleſh, and Skin renew'd.
When forthwith joyntly the four Winds conſpir'd
To breathe on each new Fabrick; ſwift, as Wind,
Freſh Life return'd, and Vigour. Up they ſtood
An Army huge, and without Number great.

Such as remain'd alive, from Death exempt,
Were chang'd, ev'n in a Moment chang'd, and made
All Incorruptible. Myſterious Work
Wrought in the twinkling of an Eye! Frail Man
How chang'd! become a Subject ſuſceptible

Of Bliſs, or Pain Eternal! I my ſelf
Among ten thouſand, thouſand more Elect,
(And oh! may what was only Viſion now,
At laſt prove Real!) found my ſelf transform'd;
My Body groſs almoſt to Spirit refin'd,
Active, and vig'rous, as the Light! From Earth
I ſprung at once into the Air Sublime,
To meet the Lord, of Quick, and Dead the Judge
All-mighty? But I firſt beheld far off
The Enſign of the great Meſſiah born
Aloft by Angels, waving fiercely round;
Tremendous Signal to his Foes accurs'd,
But to his *Choſen* Joy unſpeakable
Portending! Onwards now the Son of God
Advanc'd, ſurrounded with Celeſtial Guards.
Not that he wanted them, for in Himſelf
He ſtood ſecure, and boundleſs Pow'r to Him,
And Judgment were committed. Such Retinue
He brought t' enhaunce the Terrour, and the Pomp
Of his Appearance, and to miniſter

His Juſtice with impartial Hand. I told
His Chariots twenty thouſand wing'd. Their Wheels
Inſtinct with Lightning, and with Spirit came down
Spontaneous, rattling from th' Empyreal Skie.
Myriads of Saints attending, thus he bow'd
The Heav'ns, and on a flying *Cherub* rode.
His Brightneſs ſhone illuſtrious far, and wide,
His fierce Career the thickeſt Clouds remov'd,
And Smoak, and Flame, and Thunder made his Way.
Till in mild Air he haulted, where (behold!)
A Cloud reſplendent was his gorgeous Throne,
Th' eternal Father in his Countnance ſhone
Fully expreſs'd, and from his Raiment flaſh'd
Intolerable Light. Beneath his Feet
Were fiery Pillars: on his dazling Head
A Rainbow marvellouſly bright. How chang'd
From Him, who once a helpleſs Infant lay,
Wrapp'd in a Manger vile? How greatly chang'd
From *Joſeph*'s Son, when he obſcure did ſtoop
To ſervile Labour? or from him, who rode

The *Aſs's Colt*, with lowly Majeſty
Meekly adorn'd; by Mortal Voice alone
Extoll'd in his Proceſſion! Or from Him,
Who once before an Earthly Judge arraign'd,
As Criminal, receiv'd his final Doom,
To hang upon a Tree accurs'd, endure
'Twixt Malefactours ignominious Death,
Author of Life, and Being! Him behold
Encircl'd now with Armies numberleſs,
Cherub, and Seraph, Potentates, and Thrones:
Riding triumphant on th' obſequious Clouds
Of Heav'n, deſcending in a Whirlwind Sound,
To *render his Rebuke* with Flames of Fire,
On Satan's Rebel Crew, and impious Men!
Him chang'd thus much, methought, I trembling ſaw
(Trembling, no doubt, for from his Face the Earth,
And Heav'ns retir'd precipitant) The Book
Of everlaſting Life was open'd wide
To publick View: wherein the Hand of God
Had wrot large Characters in pureſt Gold.

The names I heard. The Tribes of Iſrael firſt,
Of each twelve thouſand. Then of ev'ry Tongue,
Nation, and Kindred, Numbers were enroll'd.
And I obſerv'd (O dreadfull Truth!) that Jews,
And Chriſtians not a few, were quite exempt
From that bright Liſt, where *Father Abraham* ſhone
Diſtinguiſh'd; whilſt from Eaſt, and furtheſt Weſt
Came Vertuous Heathens, and ſupply'd their Room.

Sights yet more wond'rous all my Soul engag'd,
Worthy to be related, if the Muſe
Flag not, and hov'ring down th' Olympian Hill,
Fall on the humble Plain, and ſpoil my Flight
Intended. But I ſaw, and ſeeing, my Heart
With Joy o'erflow'd. The Judge Supreme held forth
In his Right-Hand invaluable Crowns
Of Glory, inwove with Amarant, and Gold,
Immortal! Such as Angels wear, and bind
On their reſplendent Locks: ſave when they bowe
Before God's Throne proſtrate, and caſting down

Theſe Regal Ornaments, acknowledge *One*
Still greater; *High above all Height enthron'd*!
Aſtoniſh'd alſo I beheld white Robes
Prepar'd to cloath the Juſt, and Glories more,
Than Eye hath ſeen, Ear heard, or Heart conceiv'd
Awaiting ſuch, as worthy ſhould be found
By Perſeverance in Good Works, and Faith
Sincere, and uncorrupt. To theſe our Lord
Propitious, leaning from his Throne began:
Whilſt Heav'n, and Earth attentive heard him ſpeak
And Hell it ſelf was mute (each Fiend accurs'd
Now tortur'd more from Proſpect of the Joys
Redounding to all Righteous men) The Voice
(Methought, I heard it) utter'd heav'nly mild,
Into my longing Soul new Hope infus'd
New Comfort, and freſh Joys unfelt before.

"Gather Your-ſelves together, my Elect!
"For Time is at an End. Eternity
"Succeeds, to you Eternity of Bliſs.

"For You, e'er Time began, or Earth was made,
"A Manſion glorious was prepar'd; for Each
"A Kingdom, and a Regal Diadem.
"Ye that are poor in Spirit, averſe from Pride,
"And Haughtineſs of mind, joyous approach!
"Heav'n is your Portion faithfully reſerv'd.
"Lift up your drooping Heads to wear a Crown!
"Ye real Mourners not diſſembling Grief,
"And Sorrow for your Sins, and for a World
"Degen'rate: who have waſted tedious Nights,
"Wat'ring your Couch with Tears; Look up! for now
"The Morning of your Joy begins to dawn,
"And Heavineſs is gone. Let Groaning ceaſe,
"And Gleams of Comfort brighten ev'ry Soul
"Afflicted! Now your ſtate is chang'd, and Tears
"Are wip'd away. What I on Earth declar'd,
"Shall never fail. *Bleſſed are Ye that mourn*!
"And ye Diſciples meek, as tender Lambs,
"Who truly learn'd of Me, *lowly in Heart*:
"And much reſemble that beloved *Saint*

"Who on my Boſom lean'd: Sufficient now
"That you have born my Yoke ſo long. You fought
"A glorious Fight. The Warfare is accompliſh'd,
"And enter into Joy! Ye Souls diſtreſs'd,
"Whom Hunger after Righteouſneſs, and Thirſt
"Severe attended, with Ambroſial Food
"Regale your-ſelves, and Chryſtal Springs of Life!
"Ye that inclin'd to Works of Mercy, come,
"Come, Mercifull, and Bleſs'd! Much you forgave,
"And much to you ſhall be forgiv'n. Such Acts
"Of Grace, be ſure, to me are pleaſing. I
"Delight in Mercy. Above all my Works,
"*Mercy both firſt, and laſt ſhall brighteſt ſhine.*
"Bleſs'd alſo are the Pure in Heart, who know
"No Guile, unlike the wayward Phariſee,
"Whom I in vain rebuk'd on Earth! Rejoyce
"Ye ſpotleſs Minds! To you alone is giv'n,
"Not darkly, but with Face to Face to ſee
"Your God, and in that Viſion to obtain
"The Fullneſs, and the Quinteſſence of Joy.

"No

"Nor ſhall ſerene, *Pacific* Tempers fail
"To reap a juſt reward: O Saints Belov'd!
"Who ſtrove in vain t' appeaſe a World engag'd
"In Strife, and Sin, behold my gracious Arms
"Extended to receive you! Crown'd with *Palms*,
"Make haſte to Reign with me in perfect Peace,
"Peace Everlaſting! Chiefly Ye are Bleſs'd,
"Who Perſecution without Horrour felt
"*In Truth's* Defence! Nought, but the *Shield of Faith*
"*Invincible*, could arm your Souls to bear
"Such Fiery Trials. Righteous *Abel*! firſt
"Thy Blood was ſpilt, and cry'd aloud to Heav'n
"For Vengeance. Prophets numberleſs were ſlain,
"Firſt hated for promulging Truth. Rejoyce
"Ye Angels, that attend my Throne! Exult
"With Triumph, to behold an Army bright,
"And glorious: Saints Heroic! all renown'd,
"And well approv'd for their Allegiance firm,
"And Loyalty untainted! Like to You,
"Undaunted Spirits, and always next in Praiſe,

 "And

"And Dignity! — When Satan, Fiend accurs'd,
"Stirr'd up Rebellion in the Realms of Light,
"And tempted Numbers with him to revolt,
"Not unſucceſsfull: Then *You* might have fall'n,
"But ſtood Victorious. So when Human Force
"Combin'd with Helliſh Cunning, enterpris'd
"Theſe Martyr's Fall, and Ruin; unſeduc'd,
"Unterrify'd they quench'd the fierceſt Flames,
"And ſmil'd in Pains, and *more than Conquerours* dy'd.
"Therefore Ye Angels hymn their Praiſes loud,
"And ſing them ever bleſs'd: of whom the World
"Was never worthy! Perfect now in Bliſs
"Thro' Suff'ring! — But who 'midſt the Army bright
"Shines yonder ſo conſpicuous? on whoſe Face
"Sits ſacred Majeſty, and Innocence
"Attracting Love? Illuſtrious Saint, approach!
"Thy Royal Name, and Vertues eminent
"Are not unknown to Me (who all Things know)
"Nor ſhall be unrewarded. *Charles*! approach,
"And for an Earthly Crown far better loſt,

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"Than kept, receive from me a Diadem
"Tranſcendent bright, Eternal, and exempt
"From Sorrows! All ye Angels hymn his Name
"Worthy of Honour! Sing *the Martyr* bleſs'd!
"Laſtly, Ye glorious Saints, who crown'd the Earth
"With Bounty, and Magnificence; who pour'd,
"Your Bleſſings, like the Dew, both far, and wide
"On needy Fellow Creatures, ſpending Life
"In doing Good; Hail! Patrons of the Poor,
"And Guardians of the Weak! Hail! Gods on Earth,
"My faithfull Deputies! The Hungry Soul
"You fed, and ſcreen'd the Naked Wretch from Cold.
"The Fatherleſs, who cry'd, you fill'd with Triumph,
"And caus'd the Widow's Heart to ſing for Joy.
"The Ear, which heard you, bleſs'd you, and the Eye,
"That ſaw you, ſparkl'd with a lively ſenſe
"Of Gratitude; and for your ſumleſs Bounty
"Perpetual Bleſſings flow'd from ev'ry Tongue.
"Therefore induſtrious Stewards, truly wiſe!
"In Recompence of all your matchleſs Deeds,

"Accept of what th' Eternal God can give,
"*Celeſtial* Treaſures, that will never fail!

Theſe gracious Words I heard the Judge Supreme
Utter with Look ſerene, and mild. But this
Was *Viſion*: which if *Real* as who doubts,
Will ſome-time be?) I had not fail'd amidſt
That bright Aſſembly, whom the Son of God
So tenderly addreſs'd, to have diſcern'd
Apparent, many Illuſtrious Men, whoſe Names
Stand foremoſt in the Liſt of *Generous* Souls,
And merit more, than Human Praiſe; deſerve
To ſing with Angels, and themſelves be ſung.

Thee, Ancient Prelate! worthieſt to adorn
That Northern See; whom *Durham* ſhall record
With laſting Honour; and *the Beauteous Seat* †
Of Learning not forgot to celebrate
With Deathleſs Praiſe: Munificently Great!
And Obſtinately Good! whoſe *Ev'n* of Life

† *Oxford.*

hines full of Glory, and of pious Deeds:
hee tow'ring I had ſeen among the Saints
lect, in blooming Vigour, crown'd with Joy.

Thou, to whoſe ſacred Mitre with Reſpect
lbion's chief City bowes; whoſe ample Gifts
hy gratefull *College* ſhall for ever own,
xulting in thy Favour! *Thou* had'ſt ſhone
onſpicuous to my Sight, accompany'd
ith *thy Bleſs'd Conſort* near the Throne, advanc'd
o a full State of Bliſs! Bright Prelate! then
ow would thy bounteous Lord have recompenc'd
hy Labour paſt of undiſſembl'd Love
o his Afflicted Church! Then had thy *Staff*
piſcopal, and *Mitre* been exchang'd
or *dazling Robes*, and a *triumphant Palm.*

Thee alſo, Champion high in Church renown'd,
nblemiſh'd Hooper! perſevering firm,
nd upright in all Times: In whom the *Dove*,

And

And *Serpent* amicably dwell; Reverʼd
By All, that love *the Gates of Sion*! Thee
With wonder I had gazʼd upon, enrobʼd
In never-fading Bliſs. All Sickneſs now,
And Pain extinct! with Spirit, and Zeal renewʼd,
A Seraph bright had led thee to the Choir
Angelic, there to joyn in ſacred Songs
Of Love, and Praiſe. Bleſsʼd Saint! how had *Thy Light*
Shone forth above, which *burnʼt ſo bright* below!

Thee chiefly (O permit me, Bounteous Lord,
With *Chandos'* Name to crown my adventʼrous Song!)
Thee, Noble Peer, Genʼrous beyond compare!
From whoſe Right-Hand, as from an Ocean, flow
Rivers of Bounty to Mankind diſtreſsʼd
Without Diſtinction: but (all Praiſe to ſhun)
Conveyʼd in Channels ſecret, and unknown:
Thee glittʼring in Superiour Robes of Light,
Amidſt ſome Train of *Patriots*, I had viewʼd
Diſtinguiſhʼd: and from God's high-ſeated Throne

In Accents mild had heard a Voice proclaim.
"Well done, thou faithfull Steward over Much!
"Let all thy Care, and laudable Perſuits
"Of Vertue, and of Honour ceaſe! Enough
"Is done to merit Heav'n; Great Soul, Approach!
"See the pure Chryſtal iſſuing from my Throne!
"There ſate thy-ſelf, and drink, to thirſt no more!

But whither has my furious Muſe unrein'd,
(Yet ſedulous to ſing of Men renown'd
For Goodneſs, and Munificence) ſeduc'd
Me wan'dring? Say, what horrid Things enſu'd
After Admiſſion of the Saints Elect
To never-failing Pleaſures? Still, methought,
The *Viſionary* Scene remain'd. I ſaw
Millions aſcending into Bliſs. And now
Hoſanna's loud th' Eternal Regions fill'd.
Till a deep Pauſe enſu'd: when from a Hoſt
Attendant on the Lord ſupreme, I heard
A Shout Victorious; that the Earth beneath

Reſounded, Heav'n was pleas'd; the Pow'rs of Hell
Shrunk at the Voice, confounded, and abaſh'd!
After the Shout was ſung in loudeſt Strains,
"Let God ariſe, and ſcatter'd be his Foes
"Obdurate! As offenſive Clouds of Smoak
"Are by the Winds diſpers'd; ſo let the Breath
"Of God conſume the Wicked; that no Place
"Of Shelter, Hill, nor Dale, nor falling Rock,
"Nor ſecret Den, to cover Guilty Heads
"Be ever found! let red hot Vengeance due
"Torment each Sinner! let him gnaſh his Teeth,
"And howling periſh in a World of Flames!

What Vengeance quick, as Lightning, was hurl'
On impious Heads, what lamentable Cries, [dow
And horrid Groans were heard, what various Kinds
Of Puniſhment each tortur'd Soul endur'd,
Immortal, but in Pains! O Muſe, refrain
From telling, if thou could'ſt! Be ſure, that *Hell*
Is dreadfull, but how dreadfull hard to ſay.

'Tis Torment exquiſite, and without End
Urging. It is to be as miſerable,
As an all pow'rfull God incens'd can make
A *Creature* obſtinate in Sin, and bent
Againſt his *Maker*. Better then to wave
A Scene thus terrible, and fear that God,
Who hath ſuch Pow'r to puniſh. Rather, Muſe,
Content thy-ſelf, not tedious, to relate,
What faithfull *Uriel* talk'd at large, and now
In Viſion ſeems tranſacted: Earth devote
To Flames, conſum'd to be renew'd, and riſe
A *Phenix* brighter than the Firſt! —— Methought,
Far from this Terrene Globe remov'd, A Cloud
Bore up my Feet in Air. And when the Doom
Severe, but juſt, in awfull Sounds declar'd
Againſt the Enemies of God, both Men,
And Fiends accurs'd, ſhook Heav'n's Circumference,
And Earth, and Sea in diſmal Echoes groan'd:
Surpriz'd, and downwards looking, I diſcern'd
Perpetual Clouds of Smoak aſcend the Skie:

Skie lowr'd, and Thunder roar'd, and Meteors blaz'd
By far leſs terrible that Sight, which *He*,
Who fled from *Sodom*, and *Gomorrha* ſaw
Safe at a Diſtance. Here all Nature ſeem'd
Expiring in a Univerſal Fire.
But upwards gazing, I perceiv'd the Clouds
Divide obſequious, and a Glorious Shape
Appear, with dreadfull Majeſty array'd:
Swift an *Arch-Angel*, Miniſter of Wrath
Divine, came flying from the Starry Sphere:
Sev'n Vials ſmoaking with uncommon Rage
In his Right Hand he held, and cry'd aloud,
Woe to the Earth, and all the Works therein!
He ſpoke, and pour'd each flaming Vial down,
Which ſudden did augment the gen'ral Blaze,
And tear up Hills by their Eternal Roots,
Inflaming all the Seas. Huge Stores of Fire
Long hid, broke looſe, and ſpread Deſtruction fa
And wide: Earth's whole Artill'ry now diſplay'd,
And turn'd to her own Ruin! Wild Uproar

Fill'

Fill'd all Things. See that beauteous World below
Become Hell's Type, where Fire, and Darkneſs rule!
See God's Creation, the whole Six Day's Work
In one tremendous Hour effac'd! I ſaw,
And trembled. But could not forbare aloud.

"O ſapient, Eaſtern-Monarch, *David*'s Son!
"Whoſe Wealth, and Pow'r, and Wiſdom *Sheba*'s Queen
"Saw with Aſtoniſhment: how juſtify'd
"Are all thy Sayings of old! with Care compil'd
"T' inſtruct frail Men in one important Truth,
"That under yon' bright Sphere, the radiant Sun
"(Tho' darken'd now) from Time's Original
"The Works of Time have only been replete
"*With Vanity*; and tranſient Glories all!
"Meer Shadows, with the *Subſtance* when compar'd
"Of Heav'nly Things, beyond the Pow'r of Time,
"Or Fortune! In a Seat prepar'd above,
"A Seat not made with Hands! Immortal Prize
"For a ſhort Life well ſpent! — But what was Man,

"Whilſt

"Whilſt Habitant of Earth? A walking Shadow
"Diſquieting himſelf in vain! Alaſs!
"A Creature but of Yeſterday, ſprung up
"To fade to morrow! whoſe ſwift circling Years
"Have well been liken'd to a ſimple Tale
"Told o'er, and ended! What was ev'ry Thing,
"That crep't, or walk'd the Ground, or ſwam, or flew
"Thro' liquid Air? The Place, that knew them once,
"Shall know them now no more — My Soul, reflect,
"Reflect, and wrap thy-ſelf in Serious Thought!
"Then tell me, if thou can'ſt; in all that World,
"Thou ſee'ſt below, now lying waſte, and wild,
"Like the firſt Chaos: what Thing Durable,
"Or Perfect, and of Solid Happineſs
"Productive, could be ever found; when moſt
"It ſhone in Glory, and look'd gay with Pride
"Fore-runner ſure of deſp'rate Ruin! Say,
"Who now will ſhew thee Nature's boundleſs Store
"Of rich Varieties, erſt ſo explor'd
"By Curious Artiſts? Lillies of the Field

"Where are they? once in gayer Pomp aray'd,
"Than *Solomon* in all his Robes! Recount
"Each Tree, or Plant from *Cedar* tall, and proud
"Of *Libanus*, down to the loweſt Shrub,
"And tell me, where it grows! The wondrous Toil
"Of Accurate Pens, unnumber'd Volumes wrote,
"With all the pious Labours of the Muſe;
"How ſudden are they ſunk in Flames, and loſt
"For ever! Works of *Manual* Art immenſe,
"*Dædalean*, vaſt Imperial Cities fenc'd
"With Tow'rs impregnable, how vaniſh'd! how
"At one Blow ſwallow'd up, to riſe no more!
"Shew me their Trophees, if thou can'ſt, and mark
"Their Pillars grand, the Characters inſcrib'd
"Read to me, and rehearſe the Victor's Name!
"Thou ancient *Rome*, once Empreſs of the World!
"Tho' deep were thy Foundations laid, and high
"Thy Palaces erected, tho', as Queen,
"Thou didſt aſſume Vain-glorious State; yet now
"Thy Pride is humbl'd: Thou art wip'd away

"From

"From Earth, in dark Oblivion 'whelm'd, become,
"As thou hadſt never been! Ye *Albion*'s Tow'rs,
"And ſtately Monuments! that once uprear'd
"Your lofty Summits frequent to the Skie,
"Exulting in your Pride, and deem'd ſecure
"From Hoſtile Rage: How in a Moment fall'n,
"And plung'd into an ambient Flood of Fire!
"But chiefly Thou *Oxonia*, Sovereign Nurſe
"Of Arts, *Britannia*'s Glory once, and Pride!
"Indulgent Mother! Thou, for whom my Soul
"Retain'd a conſtant, Filial Love, Sincere
"In Evil Times! ah! how art thou involv'd
"In this Impartial Ruin; that no Mark
"Of all thy Splendour, and Magnificence
"Remains! In deep Oblivion now ingulf't
"Thou ly'ſt, who to thy Sons Illuſtrious once
"Didſt Life, and Fame Immortal give. O Pomp
"Short-liv'd of Earthly Grandeur! — Struck again
"With dire Surprize, I roll my Eyes to find
"The ever-during Hills, and pendant Rocks,

"Earth's Ribs invulnerable! Which have born
"The Brunt of Ages, and whoſe griſly Tops
"Have long defy'd th' Artillery of Heav'n
"Employing all it's Shafts in vain? I look'd,
"But They were gone. Their Place was no where found.
"Here not long ſince the *Alpine* Hills were rang'd,
"A Chaos upon Earth! extended far
"To *Adria*'s ſtormy Gulf: now all conſum'd,
"As tender Clouds diſſolve in Rain. There ſtood
"The *Lybian* Mountains. *Atlas* with his Top
"In ſable Clouds obſcur'd: by Bards long feign'd
"To prop the Heav'ns. *Olympus* tow'ring there!
"And fair *Parnaſſus* rais'd it's Laurel'd Head,
"Bleſs'd Haunt of Muſes! once by Me ador'd
"Fondly aſpiring to it's Height: but now
"Inviſible! —— Here frozen *Caucaſus*,
"And *Imaus*, bleak with *Scythian* Winds upheav'd
"Their Vaſtneſs. Not far off ſtood *Taurus* huge,
"Stretch'd from the *Indian* Sea far Weſtward, ſtyl'd
"In Sacred Writ *Mount Ararat*, whereon

"Firſt *Noah*'s Ark found Reſting, and a Shore
"Long wanted; now a ſecond Time (O Sight
"Incredible!) lies *Delug'd*, but in *Fire*
"Outragious to devour! Yon' tow'rds the North
"High over ſhadowing once *Riphean* Hills
"Appear'd, with *Hyperborean* Ice, and Snow
"Thick clad. But now *the Iſles are fled away*,
"*And Mountains are not found* ——
"How marvellouſly Great throughout the World,
"Lord God Almighty, are thy Works! how juſt,
"And true thy Ways, Eternal King of Saints!

I ended ſpeaking, and a Voice enſu'd:
(The Viſion diſappearing) but as yet
My Spirits were all intranc'd, and Sleep profound
Had clos'd mine Eyes; when, as I thought, theſe Word
Beſpake Attention ſtrict. Wiſely, O Man,
Thou haſt obſerv'd, that Earthly Things are vain,
And tranſient, unſubſtantial, uncomplete.
Then ſoar a-loft, and grovel not below,

But ſet thy Thoughts on Joys above, where *Chriſt*
Thy Saviour ſits at God's Right Hand enthron'd!
What Thou haſt ſeen ſo plain reveal'd in Dream,
Think not intended to allay thy Thirſt
Inſatiate of Tranſcendent Knowledge, or
T' indulge thy Fancy ſtudious to a Fault
Of Novelties Myſterious. Truſt me, No.
Beware, thou do'ſt not miſinterpet Heav'n,
When Heav'n grants Favours. Oh! now rather deem,
A Scene ſo wondrous ſhould unfold it's Terrours,
(A God Deſcending, and a World in Flames!)
For nobler Purpoſes: to arm thy Soul
With brave Diſdain of *Temporal* Things, to Senſe
Tho' obvious; and to make Her pant, engag'd
In high Perſuit of diſtant Joys, unſeen,
Nathleſs *Eternal*! Henceforth ſhould thy mind
Retentive ſtill of what it ſaw diſplay'd
In Viſion lofty, and Prophetick, ſeiz'd
With deep, Religious Fear adore that Being,
Who ſhall *by Fire* deſtroy this World; and Thee,

Both Body, and Soul in Hell, except ſincere
Repentance ſtop his vengefull Arm. Oft mind
What thou haſt ſeen, and tremble to tranſgreſs.

Let thoſe bright Glories, that await the Juſt,
And ſhall one Day by Chriſt the Judge Supreme
With Juſtice be diſtributed, inflame
Thy Zeal, and Love of Vertuous Deeds, confirm
Thy Faith well built, and quicken ev'ry Grace.
That *Groaning earneſtly* to be *new Cloath'd*
Upon, thou mayſt thy Ardent Wiſh obtain,
Deſert *this Tabernacle*, and put off
Mortality, Inſufferable Load
T' aſpiring Minds, till *ſwallow'd up in Life*!

So wilt thou imitate that Convert *Saul*;
Who rapt in Extaſie above the Pole
To the third Heav'n, or Paradiſe, there heard
Unutterable Words, and Glories ſaw
Beyond Conception. After he had loſt

The Viſion bright, remembring ſtill the Scene
All glorious, Earth He ſcorn'd, aſpir'd to Joys
Celeſtial, and ev'n long'd to be diſſolv'd,
And be with Chriſt (far better Place!) Fail not,
Thou highly favour'd! by what thou haſt ſeen,
And heard, to profit: and from Sight obtain'd
Of Things but *Viſionary*, be prepar'd
Againſt what will be *Real.* —— Suppliant I
Reply'd, but could no Shape diſcern. O Voice
Propitious! Heav'nly Monitor, and Guide!
Methinks, already I contemn the Earth,
And trample on her Glories with a Scorn
Superiour; for ev'n now I ſeem to feel
Divinity within me *breeding Wings*,
Wherewith to ſoar above all Senſual Joys,
To graſp at Immortality, and Life,
And draw Empyreal Air. O Viſion bleſs'd;
To me vouchſaf'd by Heav'n! a Type ſo true
Exhibiting of *Future Judgment*! Sent,
No doubt, to warn *Me* of my *Grand Concern*

By ſtrongeſt Motives: repreſenting Hell
To me, if diſobedient found, but Heav'n,
And all it's Glory, if *faithfull to the End.*

Good God! forbid, that I by wilfull Sin
(Wilfull, becauſe in me entire is plac'd
My Weal, or Woe, ſufficient by thy Grace
To ſtand) ſhould fruſtrate ev'n that boundleſs Grace,
And Mercy tow'rds me! No. My glowing Lamp
Well trimm'd ſhall no ſupply of Oil require,
But with a bright, and holy Flame expect
The *Midnight Cry*, and Bridegroom's ſilent Step.

Only permit me, Voice benign, and *ſtill*,
As that which heretofore from *Horeb* heard
(The Mount of God) ſucceeded Wind, and Fire,
And Earthquake: O permit me to implore
This laſt Requeſt without Offence! When Earth,
And this Sublunar Vault ſhall Flames endure,
And be reduc'd to Chaos, and a Maſs

Con-

Conflagrant: will it be for ever doom'd
To lie in ſuch a ruinous State, a Heap
Of ſtrange Confuſion, and perhaps a Blot
Apparent, tho' minute, in God's fair Work
Of the Creation? Rather from theſe Ruins
Won't a new Earth purg'd, and refin'd ariſe
Founded in Righteouſneſs? Far happier Place,
Than *Eden*, and producing happier Days:
A Seat of Reſpiration to the Juſt,
Where Tears, and Pain, and Death ſhall be no more!
Where *God himſelf* ſhall dwell, and be a Light
To all the Bleſs'd Inhabitants? no need
Of Sun, or Moon to ſhine therein: if Earth
Be chang'd to Heav'n, and Heav'n itſelf to Earth,
One Kingdom, Joy, and Union without End.

The Voice gave Anſwer not without Reproof
Deſerv'd: O Man! Thy Appetite *to Know*
Unbounded roves, demanding proper Check,
As much as Hunger after Food. Long ſince

Kind

Kind Heav'n to thy importunate Requeſts
More, than Enough, vouchſaf'd. Joy therefore thou
In what thou know'ſt, and ſeek to know no more!
New Heav'ns, and Earth are mention'd more, than once,
In *God's Eternal Book*: and what therein
Is writ, muſt come to paſs. Nor ſhall one Word,
Nor one *Iota* fail. As that preſcribes,
Be all thy Care to live. So by Degrees
Of Merit rais'd, Full Bliſs thou ſhalt inherit
At God's Right Hand, Pleaſures for evermore!

Intranc'd I heard theſe gracious Words, but now
Such Raptures fill'd my Breaſt, that I awoke,
And, as ſtill hearing the Bleſs'd Voice, I ſung,
Like *David* once (tho' far leſs joyous He,
When from invet'rate *Saul* he fled) "My Heart
"Is fix'd on thee, O God! my Heart is fix'd:
"I'll ſing, and utter Praiſe. My Glory, awake!
"Awake both Lute, and Harp! and I my-ſelf
"With all my Pow'rs right early will awake.

"From

"From Earth to Heav'n thy Mercy high extends,
"Thy everlaſting Truth aſcends the Clouds.
"Set up thy-ſelf, O God! above the Heav'ns,
"And ſpread thy Glory above all the Earth,
"For thou art All in All! — *Thee* firſt, and laſt,
"While Breath remains, the Pious Muſe ſhall ſing.

Thus free from Noiſe, and Strife, where *Iſis* flows,
For ever ſacred Stream! in ſweet Receſs;
Smit with the Love of *Poeſie Divine*,
Mean Follower of *Great Milton*, I preſum'd
To ſtring my Lyre neglected long, and chooſe
No vile, or abject Theme; but Earth's whole Frame
Diſſolv'd, and *Chriſt* to Judge Mankind return'd.
Not hopeleſs, nor much hoping, that a World
Degen'rate will attend the Sacred Muſe,
And learn t' expect the Day, She ſtrove to ſing.

The Texts of Scripture alluded to in the Second Book.

Gen. 18.
Gen. 28.
Acts 17. v. 31.
Isa. 13. v. 10.
Isa. 24. v. 23.
Luke 21. v. 26.
1 Pet. 4. v. 18.
1 Thess. 4. v. 16.
1 Thess. 4. v. 14.
Isa. 26. v. 19.
Ezek. 37. v. 7.
1 Cor. 15. v. 52.
1 Thess. 4. v. 17.
Heb. 12. v. 23.
Mat. 28. v. 18.
Ps. 68. v. 17.
Ps. 18. v. 10, 11, 12.
Rev. 10. v. 1.
Isa. 66. v. 15.
Rev. 20. v. 12.
Rev. 21. v. 12.
Mat. 8. v. 11.
Rev. 6. v. 11.
John 14. v. 2.
Mat. 5. v. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.
Ps. 6. v. 6.
Ephes. 6. v. 16.
Mat. 11. v. 29.
Job 29. v. 13.
John 13. v. 23.
1 Tim. 6. v. 12.
Jam. 3. v. 16.
Rom. 8. v. 37.
Ps. 39. v. 6.
Heb. 11. v. 38.
Heb. 2. v. 10.
Mat. 25. v. 36.
Mat. 6. v. 20.
Ps. 68. 1, 2.
Rev. 15. v. 7.
Rev. 22. v. 1.
Rev. 18. v. 7.
2 Cor. 5. v. 1.
Luke 11. v. 28.
Rev. 6. v. 16.
2 Pet. 3. v. 13.
Rev. 15. v. 3.
Gen. 8. v. 4.
Col. 3. v. 1, 2.
2 Cor. 4. v. 18.
Mat. 10. v. 28.
2 Cor. 5. v. 1, 2, 3, 4.
2 Cor. 12. v. 4.
Rev. 2. v. 10.
Mat. 25. v. 1, 2, 3, 4.
1 Kings 19. v. 12.
Rev. 21. v. 23.
Mat. 5. v. 18.
Ps. 16. v. 11.
Psal. 57. v. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

FINIS.